



## RMLL RIC Report - 2014

2014 was easily the most difficult in my 8 year tenure as the RMLL RIC. Fortunately, this did not come as a result of an increase in violent play or schedule disruptions or anything else involving RMLL teams or administration of the RMLL or ALA, but rather due to an insufficient supply of adult referees in Alberta and the impact that this shortage has on the ability of the ALRA to service the RMLL and the needs of its teams. Simply put, the ALRA currently does not have a sufficient senior referee base to adequately service the probable RMLL schedule for 2015 within its currently constituted projected parameters.

What this means in plain language is that if the RMLL teams insist on retaining their current scheduling matrix, the RMLL can expect games to be unserved by accredited ALRA officials at certain times in 2015 and then needing those games to be rescheduled with all the attendant costs to that process. My hope is that scheduling issues can be resolved and that we are able to construct a schedule for the 2015 season that is workable and amenable to all stakeholders.

### Rules

We were in our second year of the rule changes regarding increased strictures on fighting and more severe penalties for high sticking. While there has been the usual problem of uniform interpretation of new rules across the province, the second year seemed to be much better than last year and there definitely has been a buy-in by the teams on the notion that player safety is an important issue and that chronic violators need to be dealt with harshly by firstly referees and following that by administrators.

While that is a positive there has been over the years a noticeable slippage by players and referees in the response to violations of **Rule 45 (e)** – *“Should a fight start on the floor, those players not involved will immediately move to their respective benches... .. Failure to do so may result in the offending player(s)/goalkeeper(s) being assessed game misconduct penalties.”* There is no question in my mind that the RMLL has been lucky to avoid a “You Tube” incident and other potentially serious consequences of the kinds of brawls that this rule is written to guard against. I will be recommending to the ALRA that this be a focus rule for 2015 in major level games and therefore teams need to be advised of this stricter application of this rule prior to next season.

## **Top Prospect Camp**

This year the ALRA, with funding underwritten by the ALA, and the scheduling cooperation of the RMLL, was able to conduct a first ever “Top Prospect Camp” in Calgary for a dozen younger officials from across the province. These individuals were all experienced referees in the RMLL but they were identified as officials who wished to improve their performance while being exposed to higher levels of competition in Alberta. The group undertook two days of classroom work under the supervision of Greg Hart and then each was assigned to and had their performance evaluated in two RMLL league games on the camp weekend. The response from everyone was extremely positive and I want to thank everyone involved especially Greg Hart, Christine Thielen and Lisa Smith for their assistance in effecting a positive camp experience for these referees.

## **2015**

Although the relationship between the ALRA and the RMLL has always been extremely positive I would recommend the following operational changes be made to ensure a more seamless conduct of the schedule in 2015.

1. The obligation of the ALRA to provide 30 second shot clock operators in the playoffs be eliminated.
2. The ALRA assignors will assign RMLL travel games on a “first priority basis”. Games between teams located in the same general area, no matter what the level, will be assigned as a lower priority.
3. ALRA members will be notified to submit only airline tickets and hotel bills, through the RMLL RIC, to the RMLL for payment during the season. Mileage and per diems will be submitted only through the ALRA aggregate invoices to the RMLL.

I would like to thank the many dedicated “lacrosse nuts” in the RMLL for all their cooperation again this season. We have developed a great programme here in the RMLL and sometimes we really don’t appreciate how good it really is.

Warren Renden

RMLL RIC